

444 Knox's Sermon Against Ungodly
Princes.

herself. The following is very characteristic : " After, Madam, that I had declared the dignitie of Kingis and reullaris, the honour whairinto God has placed thame, the obedience that is dew unto thame, being Goddis lievtennentis, I demanded this questioun. But O, allace, what compte 'shall the most part of princes maik befoir that Supreme Judge whose throne and authoritie so manifestlie and schamefullie thai abuse? That the complaynt of Solomon is this day most trew, to wit, * That violence and oppressioun do occupy the throne of God here in this earth;' for while that murtheraris, blood thrystie men, oppressouris, and malefactouris dar be bold to present thame selfis befoir kingis and princes, and the poor sanctis of God are banished and exyled, what shall we say, But that the devill hath tacken possessioun in the throne of God, which ought to be fearful to all wicked doeris and a refuge to the innocent oppressed. And how can it otherwise be ? For princes will not understand ; thai will nott be learned as God commandis thame. But Goddis law thei despyse, His statutes and holy ordinances thei will not understand ; for in fidling and flynging thei ar more exercised then in reading or hearing Goddis most blessed Word ; and fidlars and flatteraris (which commonlie corrupt the youth) are more pretious in thair eyes than men of wisdom and gravitie who, by holsome admonitioun, mycht beat down into thame some part of that vanitie and pride whairintill all are borne, but in princes tack deepe root and strenth by wicked education." He did not, he concluded, utterly condemn dancing, but dancing should not express pleasure in the displeasure of God's people. If so, God would turn their mirth into sudden sorrow. He would not always afflict His people nor continue to wink at the tyranny of tyrants.

The quotation is interesting as an example of that bold liberty of criticism: of royalty in which Knox indulged in public as well as private. He was not solitary in this respect among Scottish preachers, and the preachers contributed to nurture a public opinion which, though not always enlightened, did not hesitate to call in question the doings of the Government. They undoubtedly helped in this way to make the Scottish people more critical and restive of authority than it had been.

Mary found the recapitulation less
offensive than the